Article

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GERMAN LEFT-LIBERALS AND THE FIRST WORLD WAR

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In an essay on politics during the First World War, A. J. P. Taylor has written, "Indeed German politics during the first World War are one of the few fields in recent history which is in danger of being over-worked." [1] Uncharacteristic though it may seem, Taylor has exaggerated. Since he wrote, historians have opened up significant new sources and approaches. The superb scholarship of Erich Matthias and Rudolf Morsey, in their works on the Inter-Party Committee of 1917-1918 and the Government of Prince Max of Baden of 1918, [2] together with the imposing work of Fritz Fischer [3] and the controversy which it has created, have reopened the debate on the political nature of the German Reich in its final years.

Until recently, the received view of German politics between 1910 and 1918 has been one which has emphasized the entrenched power of feudal conservatism, middle-class nationalism and militarism. Although men as diverse as Arthur Rosenberg, Carl Schorske, Erich Eyck and Fritz Fischer advance quite different interpretations, they all appraise the situation of the Left bleakly. They present liberalism as a spent force, and socialism as a movement chained by Lassallean statism or organizational oligarchy. Long before 1914, they claim, the Left had vanished as a significant force in German politics. The War simply confirmed the absence of a truly radical impetus.

Matthias and Morsey, however, have examined the activities of the Inter-Party Committee, set up in July 1917 by the leaders of the Majority Socialist, Progressive, Centre and National Liberal parties to coordinate the struggle of a majority in the Reichstag to secure political reform and a negotiated peace. They have shown that the purpose of the founders of the Inter-Party Committee was to create a Left strong enough to win a share of political power. And they have shown that this purpose was fulfilled when the Government of Prince Max of Baden was created early in October, 1918. Where other historians have interpreted the Inter-Party Committee and the Government of Prince Max as mani-

1 A. J. P. Taylor, *Politics in Wartime*, London, 1964, p. 11.
2 Erich Matthias and Rudolf Morsey, *Der Interfraktionelle Ausschuss*, Dusseldorf, 1959, 2 vols., and *Die Regierung des Prinzen Max*, Dusseldorf, 1962.
3 Fritz Fischer, *Griff nach der Weltmacht*, Dusseldorf, 1964 (3rd edition).

festations of a death-bed conversion to the cause of peace and reform,[4] Matthias and Morsey have drawn upon previously unused material to show that, in 1917-1918, a real Left did arise in Germany, with a genuine commitment to Western liberal precepts.

The purpose of this paper is to relate the themes set forth by Matthias and Morsey to the specific case of the Left-Liberals, that is, the Progressives. In a preliminary and general way, I would like to demonstrate how the revival of the Left in 1917 and 1918 was the culmination of a movement begun around 1910, a movement which saw the Social Democrats cooperating with resurgent middle-class radicals. I would like to focus upon the activities of a small group of men on the left wing of the Progressive Party who revitalized middle-class radicalism before the War, attempted to stem the tide of violent nationalism during the first two years of the War, and finally took command of the Progressive Party in 1917 and 1918, bringing Left-Liberalism into a firm alliance with revisionist socialism. By extending the themes worked out by Matthias and Morsey to include the pre-war years, and by focusing upon the Progressive left-wing, this paper will hopefully cast some light on the origins of the Democratic Party, for it was the Progressive left wing which controlled the Democratic Party during the months when it played a disproportionately great role in the creation of the Republic. The leaders of Germany's enemies in 1918 and historians ever since have been searching for the "godly men" whose sincere belief in liberal or socialist principles might have redeemed Germany. For what it is worth, this paper describes a hitherto ignored band of men of goodwill, and seeks to show how they remained true to their ideals despite the fearful pressures which total war exerted on an antiquated and rigid political structure.

In 1900, Left-Liberalism (that is, the middle-class political force which had refused to follow behind Bismarck along the path of nationalism) was at its nadir. There were no less than three small left-liberal parties. The largest was the *Freisinnige Volkspartei*, confined mainly to Prussia, a party whose dour and domineering leader, Eugen Richter, had turned it into a closed fortress to defend *laissez-faire* principles against the Bismarckian state.[5] Secondly, there was the loosely-organized *Freisinnige Vereinigung*, made up of men whom Richter had expelled

[4] For example, see Carl Schorske, *German Social Democracy 1905-1917*, Cambridge (Mass), 1955, Parts IV and V; Fischer, *Weltmacht*, Ch. I and *passim.*; Erich Eyck, *Das personliche Regiment Wilhelms II 1890-1914*, Erlenbach-Zurich, 1948, passim.; Theodor Eschenburg, *Die improvisierte Demokratie*, Munich, 1963, pp. 11-41, 97-109; Arthur Rosenberg, *The Birth of the German Republic*, New York, 1962, Chapter I.

[5] For the history and organization of Richter's party, see Thomas Nipperdey, *Die Organisation der deutschen Parteien vor 1918*, Dusseldorf, 1961, pp. 198 ff; Ursula Steinbrecher, *Liberale Parteiorganisation unter besonderer Berucksichtigung des Linkliberalismis 1871-1893*, Cologne, 1960, pp. 172 ff (D Phil thesis).

from his party in 1893 after their attempt to swing it behind Bismarck's successor, Caprivi. [6] The *Vereinigung* leaders were amateurs compared to Richter, and their faction stagnated until 1903. Then, Friedrich Naumann, a conservative pastor and publicist of surpassing energy, led his followers into the *Vereinigung*. [7] Once Naumann ceased attacking liberalism and instead propagated the neo-liberalism which he was learning from Max Weber, [8] the orthodox *cul de sac* into which Richter had led liberals was cleared away, and an increasing number of middle-class Germans were given the chance to apply a non-socialist radicalism to the political and social problems of Germany in the new century. The third left-liberal party was the *Deutsche Volkspartei;* it was composed of democrats from the South-West, and dominated by the Württemberg leaders, Friedrich Payer and Conrad Haussmann. It was these experienced mediators who brought the *Volkspartei* into contact with the *Vereinigung* in 1906, after the death of Richter, and who promoted the ideal of left-liberal unity in the era of the Bülow Bloc. [9]

In 1910, the careful efforts of the Swabians were rewarded with the formation of the Progressive People's Party. Although orthodox Richterites staffed the Progressive organization and outnumbered the neo-liberal radicals, the radicals were able to leave an increasing mark on the political and social policies of the new Party. [10] The programme of 1910 explicitly committed the Party to reform of the Prussian franchise and federal constituencies, and to the overhaul of labour and social legislation. [11] The tactics of the Progressives in the federal arena were

[6] For the struggle between the "Secessionists" and Richter, see Nipperday, *Organisation*, pp. 182-191; Erich Eyck, *Wilhelms II*, p. 254; Hermann Pachnicke, *Fuhrende Manner im alten und neuen Reich*, Berlin, 1930, pp. 27-30; J. A. Nicholls, *Germany After Bismarck: the Caprivi Era 1890-1894*, Cambridge (Mass), 1958, p. 254; F. C. Sell, *Die Tragodie des deutschen Liberalismus*, Stuttgart, 1953, p. 289; and Gustav Seeber, *Zwischen Bebel und Bismarck*, Berlin, 1965, pp. 92-99.

[7] For Naumann's early career and the National Social Union, see Theodor Heuss, *Friedrich Naumann*, Stuttgart, 1949 (2nd edition), pp. 11-188.

[8] For Haumann and Weber, see Wilhelm Mommsen, *Max Weber und die deutsche Politik*, Tubingen, 1959, pp. 80-102 and *passim:* Heuss, *Naumann*, pp. 102-104.

[9] Erich Dombrowski (alias Johannes Fischart), a radical journalist not normally in sympathy with Payer, wrote in *Weltbuhne* that "Not the least of Payer's services was the amalgamation (of the three left-liberal parties) into the Progressive People's Party." (Dombrowski, *Das alte und das naue System*, Berlin, 1919, p. 262.) Payer comments on his role in the creation of the Progressive Party in *Von Bethmann Hollweg zu Ebert, Erinnerungen und Bilder*, Frankfurt aM, 1923, p. 21, and in *Mein Lebenslauf*, unpublished memoirs now deposited in the Bundesarchiv in Koblenz.

[10] For the Progressive organization, see Nipperday, *Organisation*, pp. 232-240. George Gothein, a member of the *Freisinnige Vereinigung*, later wrote that "more and more, leadership came to rest with (former members of the Vereinigung)." This is taken from Gothein's "Aus meiner politischen Arbeit," unpublished memoirs now in the Gothein *Nachlass* in the Bundesarchiv Koblenz. Henceforth, when reference is made to *Nachlasse*, the relevant portfolio number will also be given, along with the page in the case of paginated collections.

[11] For the Progressive programme, see *I. Parteitag der Fortschrittlichen Volkspartei*, Berlin, 1910, pp. 5-8 (Bundesarchiv Koblenz Z Sg 1-52/2).

guided by the strategic goal of uniting the Social Democrats with all the other parties left of centre to form a great left-wing Reichstag majority.[12] Thus, in the 1912 elections, the Progressives concluded agreements with both the National Liberals and the Social Democrats, not only saving themselves from extinction at the polls thereby (extinction which threatened because their organization was so new) but helping to give the SPD, Progressive and National Liberals 197 seats in a 397-man Reichstag.[13] Of this total, the Progressives numbered 42. When the Centre joined these three parties in 1913 to condemn the government's handling of the Zabern Affair, the Progressives believed that their work as a mediating, unifying *Mittelpartei* was bearing fruit, and they looked forward optimistically to a future in which a left-wing Reichstag majority would force the government to reform the institutions of the Reich.[14] Whether or not this optimism was misplaced is a question quite different from whether or not it existed. In retrospect, the weaknesses of the Progressive position are abundantly apparent. Although the Progressives themselves realized their weaknesses, nonetheless they were confident that their great days were coming.

The War blasted these bright hopes. Concentrating as they had on domestic affairs, the Progressives had ignored foreign policy. They shared the national misconception that Germany had been attacked by Russia and France, and was fighting a defensive war.[15] They fully supported the *Burgfriede*, or civil truce, proposed by the government, although they amended the government's original suggestion so that the Reichstag was only prorogued and not dissolved.[16] For the first year of the War, the Party was solidly united behind Chancellor Bethmann Hollweg, believing as did the Chancellor that a public discussion of war aims during the War would only disrupt national unity and jeopardize

[12] This strategy of the Left Bloc was spelled out by Naumann in his book, *Die politischen Parteien* (Berlin, 1910).

[13] The best analysis of the 1912 elections and the role of the Progressives in them is made by J. Bertram, *Die Wahlen zum deutschen Reichstag vom Jahre 1912*, Dusseldorf, 1965. Bertram effectively refutes the biased and partial analysis which the only previous commentator, Carl Schorske, had presented (Schorske, *SPD*, Chapter IX).

[14] For example, see Naumann's speech to the Reichstag, printed along with other comments by Progressives in *Mitteilungen fur die Mitglieder der Fortschrittlichen Volkspartei*, Berlin, 1913, pp. 292-293 (Bundesarchiv Koblenz). The view of John Snell cannot be accepted that "While men like Nietzschke, Harden, George and Hauptmann boldly criticized the realities of the Wilhelmine era, a chastened liberal democracy more wearily pursued its somewhat tarnished objectives for a future. Wariness was increasingly its watchword in the Wilhelmine era, and a growing loneliness was its fate in the political ring." (*Journal of Modern History*, vol. 19, p. 57.) This is a literary assertion rather than a verified historical judgement.

[15] Hans Peter Hanssen, *Diary of a Dying Empire*, Bloomington, 1955, p. 24; Conrad Haussmann, *Schlaglichter, Reichstagbriefe und Aufzeichnungen*, Frankfurt aM, 1924, pp. 2-9; Heuss, *Naumann*, pp. 321 ff.

[16] Payer, *Erinnerungen*, p. 24; Haussmann, *Schlaglichter*, p. 5.

German success. The Progressives neither wanted nor renounced annexations; they simply ducked the issue. [17]

In mid-1915, a small group of Progressives began to agitate within the Party and in public for annexations. Led by Ernst Müller-Meiningen, who had been one of the few South German Richterites, and Otto Wiemer, a stalwart of the Richterite machine in Berlin, the Progressive annexationists shared the aggressive confidence of the annexationists in the other parties. [18] In direct reply to the annexationists, a left-wing Progressive, Georg Gothein, published a reasoned and eloquent appeal for a peace negotiated as soon as possible on the basis of the pre-war situation. He refuted the annexationist contention that territorial extensions would be necessary for German security and prosperity. [19] His attack on annexationism brought a letter from Conrad Haussmann supporting him and urging him to get in touch with the editor of the *Berliner Tageblatt*, Theodor Wolff. [20] This letter was one of the first indications of the formation of a self-conscious and consolidated Progressive left wing. It was also the first sign of a divergence between Haussmann and his close friend, Payer. For while Haussmann and Gothein were considering a government repudiation of annexations, Payer and Otto Fischbeck, the leaders of the Reichstag Fraktion and Party Central Committee, were upholding Bethmann Hollweg's policy of not committing Germany one way or the other. [21]

In the latter half of 1915, Haussmann and Gothein fought to prevent their party from supporting annexations. The best way to frustrate annexationism, they believed, was to join with Payer and Fischbeck, and so Gothein and Haussmann swallowed their reservations about the policy of the Chancellor and the Progressive leaders. [22] Faced with this defensive alliance of the left and centre, the right-wing of the Party could move only with caution towards annexationism. For all practical purposes, the Progressives remained united. In December 1915, when the Social Democrats pressed Bethmann Hollweg for a repudiation of

[17] For the Progressive support of a moratorium on debate, see *Mitteilungen 1914*, pp. 214-215; Fischbeck to Payer on 17 November 1914, concerning a declaration of the Progressives, National Liberals and Centre which would neither accept nor reject annexations (*Payer Nachlass* 10, pp. 49-51); Haussmann, *Schlaglichter*, pp. 17-18. Fischer mistakenly placed the whole Progressive party in the annexationist camp (*Weltmacht*, pp. 213-214).

[18] For the Progressive annexationists, see Haussmann's notes on a Fraktion meeting in May 1915 (*Haussmann Nachlass* 25); Hermann Ostfeld, *Die Haltung der Reichstagsfraktion der Fortschrittlichen Volkspartei zu den Annexions — und Friedensfragen den Jahre 1914 bis 1918*, Wurzburg, 1933, p. 11 (privately printed dissertation); and the pamphlets which Adolf Neumann-Hofer and Friedrich Hoff issued in reply to Gothein (Hoff, "Kriegsziele", 25 July, 1915, *Haussmann Nachlass* 25).

[19] Georg Gothein, "Quo Usque Tandem Europa," *Haussmann Nachlass* 25, Gothein Nachlass 37, pp. 55-63.

[20] Haussmann to Gothein, 25 June 1915, *Haussmann Nachlass* 114.

[21] Fischbeck to Payer, 30 June 1915, *Payer Nachlass* 10, pp. 137-139.

[22] Haussmann, *Schlaglichter*, pp. 49-52.

annexations and the Conservatives pressed even harder for an explicit avowal, it was Payer who stepped in to negotiate a face-saving compromise and preserve a semblance of national unanimity.[23] But, even as Payer mediated, Haussmann was wondering if the Social Democrats might not ultimately be right to demand that the government explicitly renounce annexations.[24] Haussmann finally decided to forego any open gesture and to work instead in private, using his remarkable network of friendships with the leaders of state and of the other parties and his rare powers of charm and tact.

As long as Bethmann Hollweg seemed to be securely in power, the Progressive annexationists considered their criticism of his policies to be a harmless exercise of their rights. But when, in mid-1916, the Chancellor came under bitter attack for his refusal to remove restrictions on the use of submarines, the Progressive annexationists were forced to defend him.[25] Although they were annexationists, they were still Progressives. In terms of the Party, this meant that the Fraktion closed ranks and the hand of Fischbeck and Payer was strengthened. Ironically, Gothein and Leonhardt, members of the anti-annexationist left wing, had long been passionate advocates of the submarine and outspoken critics of the capital ship policy of Tirpitz.[26] Gothein continued to promote the submarine, but not unlimited submarine warfare.[27] Professor Fisher is wrong to adduce that Gothein was a veiled annexationist.[28]

In September and October, 1916, the right-wing attack on Bethmann Hollweg's submarine policy mounted to its crescendo. The Progressives in turn stood by the Chancellor. That they did so meant a victory for Haussmann and Gothein. Haussmann himself estimated that "about two-thirds (of the Fraktion) are with us on a resolute path of rationality," and, because of this, he was convinced that "The existence of our Fraktion and my group within it seems utterly necessary."[29] Otherwise, the Chancellor would be forced to rely solely upon the Social Democrats, and to the horrors of world war would be added the threat of class war.

The end result of the submarine crisis was a defeat for the Progressives and for Bethmann Hollweg. The Centre Party sponsored a motion which carried in the Finance Committee, pledging the Reichstag to support unlimited submarine warfare whenever the High Command

[23] *Ibid.*, pp. 51-52.
[24] Haussmann, "Die politische Lage Anfange des Jahres 1916, Bericht," Stuttgart, 1916, *Payer Nachlass* 10, p. 307.
[25] For example, Payer to the Progressive Conference in March 1916, *Mitteilungen 1916*, pp. 116-117.
[26] Gothein, *Aus meiner politischen Arbeit*, pp. 9-16; Wilhelm Heile, "Fur die U-Boote und wider Tirpitz und Vaterlandspartei," *Die Hilfe*, 21 March 1918; *Mitteilungen 1917*, pp. 5-9; Payer, *Erinnerungen*, p. 220.
[27] For example, see Gothein, "Kriegszeile," *Haussmann Nachlass* 25.
[28] Fischer, *Weltmacht*, p. 430.
[29] Haussmann, *Schlaglichter*, pp. 63-65.

thought its adoption necessary.[30] Ludendorff thus had a blank cheque which he could cash to overcome Bethmann Hollweg whenever he chose to do so. Nevertheless, by using the currency of Reichstag opinion, Ludendorff would be acknowledging its value.[31] Although there was a right-wing majority in October 1916, this could become a left-wing majority if and when the Centre decided to swing left, and such a majority would be as hard to ignore as the right-wing majority had been. Before the War, Friedrich Naumann had led the Progressive campaign for a left-wing Reichstag Majority, but in 1915-1916 he was too busy preparing proposals for sweeping changes in Central Europe to be concerned with mundane party politics. Instead, it was Conrad Haussmann who was trying to bring all the parties of the Left together. In December 1916, Haussmann was overjoyed when Bethmann Hollweg offered peace terms to the enemy, for he had suggested such an offer two months earlier in a series of letters to the Chancellor.[32] He chose to overlook the qualifications with which Bethmann Hollweg hedged the offer, and to regard it as genuine. So, when the Conservatives tried to eviscerate the peace offer by adding even more qualifications, Haussmann and the Progressives fought to protect the original statement.[33] They were delighted to be joined by the Social Democrats and Centre Party. In the defence of Bethmann Hollweg's peace offer, the left-wing Reichstag Majority made its first appearance since the Zabern Affair of 1913. It was Haussmann's concern to preserve this majority, and turn its attention to domestic reform.

The submarine controversy marked the end of the *Burgfriede* and the return to the political balance of 1914, the balance, that is, between an entrenched Right and a revived Left. When the Prussian Conservatives forced the government to introduce a "reform" of the law of family entail, the Left in the Prussian Landtag responded by calling for franchise reform.[34] In September 1914, the government had promised that such reform would be part of a "new orientation" after the War, but, faced with the Conservatives' eagerness to protect every privilege of the landowners, the Progressives decided that they wanted an equal concession immediately. The Landtag debate quickly carried over to the Reichstag, and Bethmann Hollweg realized that he could not continue his delicate balancing act. The outbreak of revolution in Russia confirmed

[30] The historian of the Reichstag has called this the true moment of Bethmann Hollweg's defeat. (Johann Bredt, *Die deutsche Reichstag im Weltkrieg*, Berlin, 1926, p. 68.) Payer retrospectively saw the day on which the Centre motion passed as the "most fateful day of the war." (*Erinnerungen*, p. 219.) Oddly enough, the papers of the Progressives, either published or private, show no sign of such a recognition at the time; they all seem to have overlooked the significance of the motion.

[31] Bredt, *Reichstag*, p. 68.

[32] For Haussmann and the "Peace Offer," see *Schlaglichter*, pp. 71-80.

[33] *Ibid.*, p. 80.

[34] *Mitteilungen 1917*, pp. 77-81.

his decision to concede reform, a decision which was announced in the Kaiser's Easter Message.

Every Progressive, whether annexationist or not, was fully committed to franchise reform in Prussia. This was not a commitment out of expediency, for the Progressive had fared well under the old franchise and could hope for little better in a system of direct, equal, secret and general voting. Rather the abolition of Prussia's three-class franchise was a Progressive article of faith. The Progressive case was in fact presented in the Landtag by an annexationist, Hermann Pachnicke.[35] What set Haussmann and Gothein apart from the right-wing, however, was their desire to go beyond franchise reform. To them, reform would have to be sweeping; it would have to include a reapportionment of Reichstag seats, responsible cabinet government in the Reich, civilian control over the Army and Reichstag approval of peace and war. Nor could they behave like Stresemann, or like the Progressive annexationists, and treat reform as something unrelated to peace. Annexations would augment the power of the Right; a smashing German victory would be the death-knell of political and social reform. Peace and reform were two sides to the same coin.[36]

Despite Haussmann's identification of peace and reform, in the spring of 1917 he felt obliged to give one or the other priority. Because the National Liberals and Centre Party tended to treat reform as a useful way of mobilizing the resources of the nation for total war, the political forces behind reform included them and added up to a large majority. On the other hand, only the Social Democrats and the Progressive left wing favoured a negotiated peace. Haussmann thus chose to emphasize the more popular goal, reform, hoping that by dextrous management he could carry the impetus for reform over into the question of peace.

However, as the German phrase runs, before you cut up a bear skin you must catch the bear. Before the Left could press for peace and reform, it had to exist. Haussmann realized that, although Stresemann had taken a bold initiative in demanding franchise reform, the National Liberals were too divided to be reliable in the long run. The Centre was equally as divided and unpredictable. The best course for the Progressives seemed to Haussmann to be to continue their efforts at bridge-building behind the scenes and to avoid any public rupture between the parties of the Left, even at the cost of immediate reforms.[37]

[35] *Mitteilungen 1915*, p. 75; *1916*, pp. 53-54; *1917*, pp. 38-44; Wilhelm Gagel, *Die Wahlrechtsfrage in der Geschichte der deutschen liberalen Parteien 1848-1918*, Dusseldorf, 1958, p. 168.

[36] For example, see the closing part of Gothein's memorandum on war aims, *Haussmann Nachlass* 25; see also *Haussmann, Schlaglichter*, p. 91, and Haussmann's notes for a Fraktion address for 20 March, 1917, *Nachlass* 25.

[37] Haussmann to Gothein, 7 April 1917, *Gothein Nachlass* 22. See also the

Haussmann's dilemma was that his own party was too small to impose its ideas on the much large parties to the left and right. The dilemma was resolved by a fellow Swabian, Matthias Erzberger.

When Erzberger became disenchanted with the government's conduct of the War, he swung the balance over to a negotiated peace not only within the Centre Party but in the Reichstag at large. Erzberger's dramatic disclosure of the failure of unlimited submarine warfare, however, tended at the time and later to obscure a more important development behind the scenes. When Haussmann learned that Erzberger was planning a major speech in the Finance Committee, he sought Erzberger out.[38] The two men discussed the possibilities of joint action between their two parties, and concluded with a decision to seek to draw in the Majority Socialists as well. Haussmann stressed in his diary that this was the first time he had ever shaken hands with Erzberger, an allusion to Erzberger's reputation as an unscrupulous operator, the German equivalent of a Texan.

Out of the Haussmann-Erzberger agreement and other contacts between the Reichstag Fraktions arose the Inter-Party Committee, which first met on the morning of July 6, the same day that Erzberger spoke in the Finance Committee.[39] The Majority Socialists, Progressives, Centre and National Liberals each sent along a representative, and the committee promptly decided to meet regularly in future whenever the Reichstag was in session. It was a measure of the importance of the Progressives as intermediaries that Payer was chosen to be the first Chairman of the Committee and thus the spokesman for the Majority.

The most significant aspect of the part which the Progressives took in the overthrow of Bethmann Hollweg was that they took no part at all. The secrecy in which Colonel Bauer, Erzberger and Stresemann shrouded their plot against the Chancellor was virtually complete; when a hint of what was going on leaked out, as it did when a staff officer asked Haussmann in the Reichstag where Erzberger could be found, the Progressives asked themselves what possible motive Erzberger might have in intriguing against Bethmann Hollweg. Since they could not conceive of any motive, they discounted the thought of conspiracy.[40] As late

important exchange of letters between Haussmann and Theodor Wolff in April 1917. Wolff was annoyed at the caution of the Progressives; Haussmann replied that his main concern was to "encourage the formation of a Left which can do nothing other than draw the consequences of its own existence." In a postscript, he added, "We can do nothing else than continue the tone of 1913" (that is, of the Zabern Affair). *Haussmann Nachlass* 117.

38 Haussmann, *Schlaglichter*, pp. 95-96.

39 For the events leading to the creation of the Inter-Party Committee, see the introduction to Erich Matthias and Rudolf Morsey, *Der Interfraktionelle Ausschuss* (hereafter referred to as Matthias, *IFA*), Dusseldorf, 1959.

40 Haussmann to Wahnschaffe, 25 October 1920, *Nachlass* 117; *Schlaglichter*, pp. 103-112.

as July 12, the day before Bethmann Hollweg's resignation, the Progressives concerned themselves with constitutional reforms and assumed that Bethmann Hollweg would fight as hard to preserve himself against the threats from the Right as he had in the past.[41] Then, when Bethmann Hollweg instead capitulated, the Progressives consoled themselves with assurances that the High Command was not necessarily opposed to parliamentarism.[42] This Micawberish complacency vanished when the Progressives, along with the rest of the Reichstag, met Bethmann Hollweg's obscure successor, the bureaucrat Michaelis.

For Haussmann, the whole crisis of July 1917 meant a bitterly-learned lesson. The main fault of the Reichstag, he believed, was that it had helped to unseat Bethmann Hollweg without having a successor ready. Through a young man in the Foreign Office, Kurt Hahn, Haussmann was put in touch with Prince Max of Baden, and from July 1917 until October 1918, all his spare time and energy were devoted to canvassing support for the Prince.[43] When Michaelis was tottering and ready to fall from office in October 1917, Haussmann tried to push Prince Max forward, but in four months he had not been able to win over enough support.[44] Once again, the Majority deposed a Chancellor without proposing a successor, and left the choice to the Kaiser. The office went to Hertling, and the Majority contented itself with the appointment of Payer to succeed Karl Helfferich as Vice-Chancellor. They also secured a vague promise from the government that it would uphold the Reichstag's Peace Resolution (itself an ambiguous formula, passed in July, which insisted that Germany was fighting a war of defence and not conquest) and reform the Prussian franchise.[45] In normal times, Payer would have graced such a high office, for he was a plain, blunt man without vanity or deceit. But in early 1918, when he actually took office, having been severely ill during the winter, Payer was condemned to be the front man for an omnipotent military dictatorship. What annoyed Haussmann, moreover, was that his old friend seemed at times to relish being the spokesman of the High Command. Franchise reform foundered on the rock of the Upper House in Prussia, while hopes for a negotiated peace vanished when the High Command dismembered Russia at Brest-Litovsk and launched a tremendous offensive in the West. The stark failure of peace and reform, failures resting on the total power of the High Command, might have demoralized the Majority. But in fact the Majority closed its ranks and eventually took action.

41 *IFA*, I, pp. 36-37; Payer, *Erinnerungen*, p. 33.

42 *IFA*, I, pp. 90-96; Haussmann, *Schlaglichter*, pp. 129-137; Payer, *Erinnerungen*, p. 40; Ostfeld, *Die Haltung der FVP*, pp. 23-24; Gothein, *Aus meiner politischen Arbeit*, pp. 115-118.

43 For Hahn's meeting with Haussmann, see Prince Max of Baden, *Memoirs*, London, 1928, vol. 1, pp. 129-130.

44 *Haussmann Nachlass* 29; *Schlaglichter*, pp. 148-150; *IFA*, I, pp. 334-362.

45 *IFA*, I., pp. 417 ff.

By the end of July 1917, Payer and Haussmann were said to be in command of the Progressive Party, with Haussmann regarded as the stronger of the two.[46] When Payer left the Party to become Vice-Chancellor, Haussmann should in theory have assumed virtual control, but Progressive politics were not so straightforward. The collapse of Russia and the British failure at Passchendaele revived the hopes of the annexationists, including those within the Progressive Party.[47] What gave the Progressive annexationists more weight in 1918 than they had had earlier was the appearance of Otto Fischbeck, the central man in the Progressive organization, among their ranks. But the very magnitude of the annexationist ambitions displayed at Bresk-Litovsk, and the military contempt for civilian interference during the negotiations, eventually forced even Müller-Meiningen, Wiemer and Fischbeck to attack the Treaty with Russia.[48] Rather than concede that Haussmann and the Progressive left wing were justified, however, the annexationists tried to save face by insisting that the Party should state publicily that it no longer felt bound by the Peace Resolution of July 1917. Haussmann and Gothein were well aware that the spirit of the Peace Resolution had been transgressed many times over since July, but they believed that the Resolution still represented a useful ideal. To save the symbol of former hopes and the possible basis for future action, the Progressive left wing refused to abandon the Peace Resolution, and fought Fischbeck vigorously.

In April, Haussmann and Naumann repulsed an attempt by Fischbeck, Müller-Meiningen, Bruno Ablass and Kopsch (a close associate of Wiemer's) to repudiate the Peace Resolution in caucus.[49] Fischbeck returned to the attack in May, when he attempted to have Gothein and another left-winger, Ludwig Haas, censured by the Fraktion executive for supporting a motion of Erzberger's critical of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. Haussmann defended his friends in June, and carried the fight back to Fischbeck, accusing Fischbeck of exceeding his powers as Chairman of the Fraktion and of distorting Party policy by pursuing a personal line of "veiled annexation." Haussmann won; Gothein and Haas were not disciplined, the Progressives did not repudiate the Peace Resolution, and the Party's close relations with the Majority Socialists were not terminated as the right wing had wished.[50]

The result of the dispute over the Peace Resolution was two-fold. First of all, Haussmann and Gothein, the leaders of the left wing,

[46] Prince Max, *Memoirs*, I, p. 149.

[47] For the upsurge of annexationism, see Ostfeld, *Die Haltung der FVP*, pp. 42-43; Ludwig Quidde (a leading pacifist) to Haussmann, 27 September 1917, *Haussmann Nachlass* 28. Fischer exaggerates the extent of this upsurge (*Weltmacht*, pp. 562-563), ignoring its failure to leave a lasting mark on official party policy, which remained committeed to the Peace Resolution.

[48] *IFA*, I, pp. 311-312.

[49] Haussmann, *Schlaglichter*, pp. 187-188; *IFA*, II, pp. 355-363.

[50] Klaus Epstein, *Matthias Erzberger*, Princeton, 1959, p. 240; *Haussmann Nachlass* 25; Haussmann, *Schlaglichter*, p. 205.

captured control of the parliamentary Fraktion and of the central Party organization. *Well before* the tide had turned decisively against Germany on the Western Front, Haussmann and Gothein had won the Progressives over to an unequivocal policy of peace and reform. Secondly, the final flurry of activity by the right wing may not have marked Progressive policy significantly, but it convinced many left-wing liberals outside the Party, particularly the intelligentsia in Berlin, that the Progressive Party had betrayed liberal ideals and was unfit to survive the War.[51] Because Haussmann was too careful a politician to publicize his victory, radicals on the fringe of the Party or outside it had no idea that he had won control, and believed that unregenerate Richterites like Fischbeck or Wiemer were calling the tune.

By the end of August, Haussmann and Gothein were convinced that the time had come to lead the Reichstag Majority in a bid for greater political power.[52] Haussmann's objective was to create a government dependent on the Majority which would be led by Prince Max. On September 12, when the Inter-Party Committee reconvened after a long break, Haussmann persuaded the other members of the Committee to clarify the attitude of the government towards peace and reform by presenting a "list of questions." As discussion continued, Haussmann adroitly transformed the "questions" into "conditions," and by the end of the meeting, he had manoeuvred the Majority into revoking the loose demands it had placed on Hertling a year before. The Majority decided to formulate more rigorous conditions; if Hertling rejected them, the Majority would demand his retirement. Haussmann had to proceed cautiously because the Centre Party was unwilling to attack Hertling, one of its veterans; in the event, the leader of the Centre Party, Gröber, sensed Haussmann's intentions and objected, but was not joined by Erzberger, the most powerful of the Centre deputies. The Inter-Party Committee decided to draft a new programme, and appointed two committees to prepare proposals on peace and political reform.[53] When the subcommittees handed in their joint report on September 21, their six-point programme was word for word the same as a programme which Haussmann had drawn up in November 1917. At that time, Haussmann had hoped that the Majority would force Michaelis' successor to accept specific conditions and guarantees: a general, equal, direct and secret franchise in all states, the appointment of a cabinet drawn from the responsible to the Reischtag, "unification" of government policy (that is, giving the Chancellor sole responsibility for civilian *and* military policy) collective cabinet discussion of policy, limitation of the Crown's right

[51] See the letters of the Progressive Meissner to Haussmann from April to June 1918, *Haussmann Nachlass* 115; see also the article by "F. H." in *Die Hilfe*, 22 August 1918, calling for a new radical party.

[52] Gothein to Haussmann, 31 July 1918, *Haussmann Nachlass* 114; Haussmann to Payer, 9 September 1918, *Haussmann Nachlass* 114.

[53] *IFA*, II, pp. 521-553.

to independent public statements, parliamentary ratification of all treaties and decisions on peace and war, release of all conquered territories, particularly Serbia and Belgium, true self-determination in Eastern Europe, and free and normal relations between Germany and the new Eastern states. In 1917, the Majority had ignored Haussmann's programme; a year later, in September 1918, it accepted his idea completely.[54]

Haussmann still faced two difficulties. Conservatives in the Centre Party, led by Gröber, objected to the introduction of full parliamentarism and refused to join any attack on Hertling. Since this difficulty could best be overcome by Erzberger, working within the Centre Party, Haussmann was content to let events in the Inter-Party Committee wait on the results of Erzberger's pressure.[55] The other difficulty was that Hertling did not want to resign. Haussmann therefore went to Payer on September 27 and informed the Vice-Chancellor that the Majority Socialists and Progressives no longer placed any confidence in Hertling. The two old friends agreed to concentrate on replacing Hertling with Prince Max.[56] Back in the Progressive Fraktion, Haussmann easily persuaded his colleagues to adopt the new programme which the Inter-Party Committee was about to accept, and to call for Hertling's resignation.[57]

Early on September 28, the Majority drew up an ultimatum which it then presented to Hertling, calling for his resignation. [58] The ultimatum reached Hertling at the same time as an order to visit the High Command at Spa. It seems certain that, *before* Hertling left Berlin for Spa, he had decided to bow to the will of the Reichstag and resign.[59] The High Command simply made this decision inevitable, for the purpose of its mysterious summons to the Chancellor was to force him to make way for a democratic leader who might be able to obtain an armistice immediately.[60]

In the confusion of the next three days, with the demands of the Reichstag and High Command reinforcing or crossing each other, one man seems to have kept his head, so that his intentions eventually prevailed. This was Haussmann, whose quiet negotiations brought about the appointment of Prince Max, even though the Majority neither expected nor wanted the successor to the Baden throne as the head of government.

54 For Haussmann's programme of 1917, see *IFA*, I, p. 417; for the programme of 1918, see *IFA*, II, pp. 663-669.
55 *IFA*, II, pp. 679-693.
56 Haussmann, *Schlaglichter*, p. 225.
57 *IFA*, II, p. 719.
58 *IFA*, II, pp. 711-725.
59 *IFA*, II, p. 727; Payer, *Erinnerungen*, p. 84.
60 The orthodox view of the overthrow of Hertling is that it was solely the work of Ludendorff. (Rosenberg, *German Republic*, p. 242; Fischer, *Weltmacht*, pp. 859 ff; Eschenberg, *Die improvisierte Demokratie*, pp. 79, 101.) This view is refuted by Matthias and Morsey, *Die Regierung des Prinzen Max*, (hereafter referred to as *"Reg. Max."*, Dusseldorf, 1962, pp. XI-XIV.

What compelled Haussmann to ignore the obvious limitations of the Prince, and to work behind the backs, and even against the wishes, of his colleagues, was his fear that the mistake of the Majority in previous crises, its failure to have a candidate ready, would be repeated.

The short-lived government of Prince Max embodied almost every constitutional and political ideal of the Progressive Party.[61] The Army was brought under civilian control, and the government transformed into a quasi-cabinet which was responsible to the Reichstag through the Inter-Party Committee. The Majority Socialists acquired responsibility for decisions of state, and were committed to support a parliamentary monarchy. When defeat and revolution brought the liberal ministry to a graceless end, Haussmann, Payer, Gothein and Naumann were crushed in spirit.[62] All that they had worked for since the left-liberal revival after 1905 had shimmered before their eyes, tantalizingly close to realization under Prince Max, and then had faded ineluctably. The left-wing Progressives had every reason to withdraw from politics after the Revolution of November 9. The Revolution killed *their* ideals, and those radical middle-class leaders who accepted the Revolution also repudiated the Progressives along with every other aspect of the vanished Empire. Rather than be forced out by the new radicals, the left-wing Progressives could have withdrawn from republican politics, honour intact. Instead, they again applied themselves to adapting to new circumstances, and carved out a vital place in the new Republic.

On November 10, a group of Berlin academics, businessmen and journalists met at the home of Theodor Vogelstein to consider the creation of a new radical, non-socialist party.[63] Since they wanted nothing to do with the old liberal parties, they needed some means outside the party system of attracting support, and so they contacted Theodor Wolff, hoping to enlist the *Berliner Tageblatt*. Wolff agreed to work with them, and got in touch with Alfred Weber, the brother of Max, for help in drafting a new programme.[64] Alfred Weber had been using the *Tageblatt* for the previous week to call for a new middle-class party to support the Majority Socialists.[65] He became the dominant figure among the Berlin

[61] For example, see Haussmann's defense of the achievements of the government, *Reg. Max.*, pp. 631-633.

[62] For example, Gothein's bleak report to his friend Breitenfeld, 15 November, 1918, *Nachlass* 16, pp. 133-136; "Aus sonnigen und trueben Tagen" (more unpublished memoirs), *Nachlass* 14, p. 320.

[63] Dr. Frankfurter, "Druckfahnen zu einen Werk ueber die DDP", p. 1, (*Haussmann Nachlass* 100, *Richthofen Nachlass* 18). See also Hjalmar Schacht, *My First Seventy-Five Years*, London, 1955, p. 150. This founding group included Theodor Vogelstein, Schacht and the otherwise anonymous figures Kleefeld (Stresemann's brother-in-law), Eichhorn, Lindenau, Segall, Silberberg, Stadt and Walrich.

[64] Theodor Wolff, *Through Two Decades*, London, 1936, pp. 138-139.

[65] For example, see Weber's articles in the *Tageblatt* on 6 November and 10 November.

radicals, who were known variously as the "Wolff-Weber Group," the "*Tageblatt*-Group" and the Left-Democrats.

There have been two standard interpretations of the origins of the German Democratic Party (DDP). One is that it arose directly from the activities of the Wolff-Weber radicals, the first public expression of which was a Manifesto published in the *Tageblatt* on November 16, calling for the creation of a new party.[66] This interpretation treats the DDP as something quite new, and was the preferred interpretation among Democrats. The other interpretation has been that the work of the Left-Democrats was a convenient cover for the old Progressives, who actually formed the substance of the new party together with a leaven of left-wing National Liberals. Both interpretations have no difficulty explaining Stresemann's decision to form a separate party; if the Democrats were actually a new phenomenon, his action was logical, but if the Democrats were but a facade for the Progressives, then his action occurred because even a facade was disagreeable to him. Historians who seek to defend Stresemann prefer the latter interpretation, since it leaves Stresemann's rivals in the position of sacrificing liberal unity for the sake of a Democratic appearance.[67]

Both interpretations should be discarded. If one has examined the history of liberalism before and during the War, one need not typify the Democrats as either old or new. We have seen how the left wing of the Progressives worked for the unification of liberalism before 1910, how it then influenced the united Progressive Party before 1914, how Haussmann and Gothein emerged as a distinct anti-annexationist faction in 1915-1916, how this left-wing faction assumed control of the Progressive Party in June and July 1918, and how the most influential Progressive, Haussmann, was a decisive figure in the government of Prince Max. The impetus of the left-wing Progressives did not die on November 9; instead, it was carried on by Gothein, so that the new Democratic Party was a fusion of old and new, of Left-Democrats, adaptable National Liberals, and those Progressives who were either on the left wing of the old Party or susceptible to its direction. The Democratic Party was thus not totally new, for it was controlled by the old left-wing Progressives, nor totally old, for it included new radicals outside politics (men like Wolff and Alfred Weber), while its policies were those of the Progressive left wing, which had won its quiet struggle against the Richterites only

[66] For example, see Sigmund Neumann, *Die Partein der Weimarer Republik*, Stuttgart, 1965 (reprint), p. 48; Erich Eyck, *A History of the Weimar Republic*, Cambridge Mass., pp. 59-60; Otto Nuschke, "Wie die Deutsche Demokratische Partei wurde...", in *Zehn Jahre deutsche Republik* (ed. Anton Erkelenz), Berlin, 1928, pp. 24-41.

[67] For this view, see A. J. P. Taylor, *The Course of German History*, London, 1945, p. 213; H. A. Turner, *Stresemann and the Politics of the Weimar Republic*, Princeton, 1963, p. 26. Turner blames the opponents of Stresemann for frustrating liberal unification.

in the last days of the Empire. And, because the Progressive left wing had been dedicated to the reform of the Empire, only in a purely temporal sense could it be called an Imperial political force. Its ideal was not the unreformed Empire but the government of Prince Max.

The evidence for the connection between the Progressive left wing and the Democratic Party can be conveyed briefly. A document prepared by one of the original Left-Democrats mentions that the founders of the DDP quickly got in touch with Gothein, probably as early as November 12.[68] No mention is made of the reasons for the hiatus between this early meeting and the publication of the Democratic Manifesto four days later, but a plausible explanation is that everyone was waiting for Gothein to canvass his colleagues in the Progressive Party. For, on November 13, Gothein sent a circular letter to twenty-one Progressive deputies. The letter informed the deputies that a new party was forming, and that it hoped to include the Progressives and any other politicians "prepared to accept accomplished facts." Men who "are not burdened in any way by annexationism" would be asked to sign the Manifesto; among the Progressives, they would include Gothein himself, Haussmann, Dove, Felix Waldstein, and, ironically, Otto Fischbeck. Fischbeck's flirtation with annexationism was being overlooked because of his great importance in the Progressive organization. A postscript which Gothein scrawled on one copy of the circular added that "Declarations of support" should be sent "to Theodor Wolff," the clear implication being that Gothein was appealing on behalf of the Left-Democrats.[69] Several Progressive deputies overcame the existing breakdown of communications and supported the Democratic Manifesto.

By November 16, there were three liberal groups: the new Democratic Party, which had been created in name only, the Progressive Party and the National Liberal Party. At this time, negotiations between the three groups commenced with a view to unification. By November 19, these negotiations had collapsed.[70] The Progressives decided to join the DDP *en bloc*, while the National Liberals set up their own new party, the German People's Party (DVP) under Stresemann and Robert Friedberg. Interest has tended to concentrate on the antipathy between Stresemann and the Left-Democrats.[71] This emphasis has meant that the far more

[68] Frankfurter, *Druckfahnen*, p. 1.

[69] The circular is in the *Gothein Nachlass* 18, pp. 71-72. The copy in Haussmann's *Nachlass* (114) contains the important postscript given here.

[70] For the negotiations, see the National Liberal *Rundschreiben* of 22 November 1918. (found in the *Richthofen Nachlass* 15), p. 1; Wolfgang Hartenstein, *Die Anfange der deutschen Volkspartei 1918-1920*, Duesseldorf, 1962, pp. 14-15; Turner, *Stresemann*, pp. 15-17; *Richthofen Nachlass* 20A (Richthofen's memorandum on his relationship with Stresemann), p. 3.

[71] For example, see Nuschke, *DDP*, p. 30; Nuschke to the DDP Conference on 19 July, 1919, Reichsgeschaeftsstelle der DDP, *Bericht ueber die Verhandlungen des I. Parteitags der DDP...*, Berlin, 1919, pp. 11-12; *Richthofen Nachlass* 20A, pp. 3-5; Gustav Stresemann, *Von der Revolution bis zum Frieden von Versailles*, Berlin, 1919, pp. 55-57; Turner, *Stresemann*, p. 26; and Wolff, *Two Decades*, p. 143.

significant antipathy between Weber's group and the Progressives, led now by Fischbeck, has been completely overlooked.[72] Yet it was the outcome of this conflict, rather than the predictable course of the hostility between Stresemann and Weber, which determined the future course of liberalism. The possibility of Stresemann working closely in the same party with Weber and Wolff was slight from the outset;[73] not just the Left-Democrats but all the Progressives were adamantly opposed to collaborating with Stresemann, whose Pan-Germanism had offended them deeply throughout the War.[74] In the months immediately following the end of the War, liberals were divided along lines which had been established during the War. Thus, the conflict between Stresemann and Weber was irrelevant, for no one other than the die-hard National Liberals wanted to have anything to do with Stresemann, and, fortunately for his ego, he would have nothing to do with the Progressives, let alone the Left-Democrats.[75]

The most important battle within liberalism was the one which Otto Fischbeck waged against Weber and Theodor Vogelstein between November 18 and mid-December. Fischbeck did not object when the Left-Democrats refused to associate with annexationists like Müller-Meiningen, Kopsch and Wiemer.[76] But he did object violently when Weber insisted on excluding even Progressives who had been in the middle of the Party during the War. Fischbeck wanted a broad party, and was supported by Wolff, who wanted to draw the line of demarcation through the National Liberal Party, including its left-wing and the whole of the Progressive Party (except its rabid annexationists).[77] In the end, Fischbeck prevailed. This was not surprising, since he controlled the only organized forces which the new party had at its disposal, and old politicians like himself,

[72] Hartenstein, whose analysis of the DDP and DVP is by far the best in print, mentions that the attitude of Stresemann on 15 November is easier to determine than that of the Progressives. He then proceeds to ignore the Progressives almost completely. (*Anfange der DVP*, p. 16).

[73] Richthofen insists that Stresemann would not even have worked with Naumann and the Progressive left wing, let along with the Left-Democrats (*Richthofen Nachlass* 20A); see also Hartenstein, *Anfange der DVP*, p. 36. For the Left-Democratic attitude to Stresemann, ses the *Berliner Tageblatt* throughout late November.

[74] Fischbeck wrote to Gothein on 21 November to state that he agreed with Wolff's insistence that Stresemann, Friedberg, Wiemer and Müller-Meiningen be excluded from the new party. (*Gothein Nachlass* 20, pp. 41-42).

[75] Gothein called Stresemann's new colleagues, Kopsch and Wiemer, "political travelling salesmen," useless without the Progressive Fraktion. Gothein to Haussmann, 25 November 1918, *Haussmann Nachlass* 114.

[76] See Fischbeck's letters to Gothein of 18 November, 21 November and 1 December, *Gothein Nachlass* 20; Fischbeck to Haussmann, 1 December 1918, *Haussmann Nachlass* 114; Vogelstein to Gothein, 26 November, 9 December, 31 December 1918, *Gothein Nachlass* 32, pp. 85-98.

[77] For Wolff's accord with this inclusive view, see his leader in the *Tageblatt* on 18 November. Three days before, the *Tageblatt* had asserted that only the left-wing Progressives, who were alleged to have formed a separate party within the old party, had foreseen defeat and revolution and acted accordingly. In letters to Gothein, Fischbeck repeatedly insisted that he was supported by Wolff in the fight against Weber.

even if compromised by their past, were the only men available who knew how to run a party. During Fischbeck's struggle with the Left-Democrats, he was supported fully by Gothein, who was working in Breslau, and by Haussmann, who was preoccupied with building up the DDP in Württemberg. Whatever the differences between Progressives before November 1918, afterwards the Progressives operated as a solid group to offset the radical Left-Democrats and turn the DDP into the successor to the old Progressive People's Party. Not "successor" in the obvious sense, however; rather in the Hegelian sense of being a new synthesis of old factors.

The first executive of the DDP consisted of Richthofen (left-wing National Liberal), Fischbeck and Alfred Weber, the leaders of the three constituent factions.[78] By the end of November, however, Richthofen, Fischbeck, Gothein and Haussmann had all lost patience with Weber.[79] It was not his radicalism which offended them, for most of his ideas, when they could be clearly understood, were the same as those principles for which Progressives had been fighting since 1910 (or at least for which left-wing Progressives had been fighting). Rather it was Weber's *style* which offended the experienced politicians, his insistence that he was the leader of new forces which were bound to sweep all that was old and tarnished. On December 13, Weber was forced to resign as Chairman of the Business Committee because of indiscreet remarks he had made in public.[80] His place was taken by Fischbeck, who became the strongest and most active Party organizer in the next four months.

Fischbeck's power was only one indication of the strength of the Progressives. Another was the background of the 74 Democratic deputies who assembled at the National Assembly in February. Forty had been Progressives before 1918 (18 as deputies), 11 had been National Liberals, and the rest had been unaffiliated. None of the Left-Democrats were elected, mainly because none were placed high on the Party's lists.[81] Nevertheless, because the left-wing Progressives were so prominent in the DDP, the emergent radicalism personified by Alfred Weber was not entirely suppressed. During the crucial months when the National Assembly worked out the basic institutions of the new Republic, the Democrats acted as a creative and conciliating minority. It was a Democrat, Hugo Preuss, who drafted the Constitution; a Democrat, Max Weber,

[78] *Richthofen Nachlass* 20A.

[79] For Gothein's attitude, see his letter to Haussmann of 25 November, in which he accuses Weber of being clumsy and petty *(Haussmann Nachlass* 114). See also Gothein's memorandum, "Bildung der DDP," in the Gothein *Nachlass* 14, pp. 324-325. For Haussmann, see his letters to Gothein of 3 December (Haussmann *Nachlass* 114) and 9 December (Gothein *Nachlass* 22, p. 91). For Naumann, see his statement that the *Tageblatt* had "Bolshevized" the Progressives (Heuss, *Naumann*, p. 453).

[80] "Sitzungen des Geschäftsführende Ausschusses der DDP 1918-1920," *Protokolle* of the *Parteigremien*, Bundesarchiv Koblenz, p. 18.

[81] Eduard Helfron (ed.), *Die deutsche Nationalversammlung*, Berlin, n. d., vol. II, appendix, pp. 2-52 (biographies of deputies).

who contributed basic ideas about the structure of the Republic; a Democrat, Friedrich Naumann, who wrote much of the Preamble; and a Democrat, Conrad Haussmann, who, as a Vice-President of the National Assembly and the Chairman of the Constitutional Committee, guided the Constitution through its passage. No other party had its goal so clearly in mind; no other party was as identified with the Republic as the Democrats. In many ways, the Republic was the sort of state which the Progressives had called for in their programme of 1910. The virtues of the Republic, such as they were, were the virtues of men like Naumann, Haussmann and Gothein. Its weaknesses were theirs. Although monarchists to a man, they were the first true Republicans, and when, through fatigue, disenchantment or age, they retired or died, the Republic lost strength at its heart. The dream which the left-wing Progressives had retained of a liberal state, a dream retained despite initial public indifference and the stress and confusion of war, gleamed briefly at Weimar, and then, in the bitter reaction to the Peace Treaty and the quick revival of the old order, it was gone.